

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 DLOS-09 SAL-00 DHA-02 ORM-02  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /082 W  
-----200230Z 011738 /73

R 191326Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2810  
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 5607

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG  
SUBJECT: THE FARAKKA UNDERSTANDING

1. UPON HIS RETURN TO NEW DELHI APRIL 18 FROM THE FARAKKA TALKS IN DACCA, GOI DELEGATION LEADER JAGJIVAN RAM TOLD JOURNALISTS THAT AN UNDERSTANDING HAD BEEN REACHED WHICH COVERED ALLOCATION OF GANGES WATER AT FARAKKA TO BANGLADESH AND THE CALCUTTA PORT DURING THE LEAN SEASON. DETAILS WOULD BE WORKED OUT VERY SOON AT A MEETING IN NEW DELHI BETWEEN INDIAN AND BANGLADESHI OFFICIALS. FOREIGN SECRETARY JAGAT MEHTA ADDED THAT THE TIMING OF THE MEETING WOULD BE ARRANGED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS SINCE THERE HAD BEEN NO TIME TO DO SO IN DACCA. WHEN ASKED IF AN UNDERSTANDING HAD NOT ALSO BEEN REACHED EARLIER, JAGJIVAN RAM REPORTEDLY SAID, "THAT UNDERSTANDING WAS FOR ONE YEAR AND THAT EXPIRED AT THE END OF 1975."

2. THE DELHI PRESS REPORTS THAT THE UNDERSTANDING RESULTED FROM A LAST-MINUTE MEETING BETWEEN RAM AND BANGLADESH CMLA ZIAUR RAHMAN. (THE INDIAN DELEGATION WAS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO DEPART DACCA APRIL 17). ACCORDING TO SAMACHAR, THE INDIAN WIRE SERVICE, CONFIDENTIAL

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RAM SAID IN DACCA "LET US HOPE THAT THIS UNDERSTANDING WILL REMOVE SUSPICION OF EACH OTHER AND RESTORE CONFIDENCE BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES". SAMACHAR REPORTS THAT IN HIS MEETING WITH GENERAL ZIA, RAM ALSO DISCUSSED OTHER ISSUES INCLUDING THE "ALLEGED BORDER INCIDENTS". RAM TOLD SAMACHAR THAT HE HOPED THAT THE TALKS WOULD "ALSO REMOVE ANY MISUNDERSTANDING RELATING TO INCIDENTS, ACTUAL OR IMAGINARY, ON THE BORDERS BETWEEN THE TWO

COUNTRIES".

3. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AT A PRESS CONFERENCE FOR FOREIGN JOURNALISTS APRIL 19, PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI DID NOT ELABORATE ON RAM'S COMMENTS AND SAID ONLY THAT THE DETAILS OF THE UNDERSTANDING WOULD BECOME CLEAR IN TIME.

4. COMMENT: BANGLADESH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER REZAUL KARIM TOLD THE CHARGE APRIL 18 THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED BOTH ON A "NUMBER" CONCERNING THE QUANTUM OF GANGES FLOW TO BE SHARED DURING THE LEAN SEASON AND ON "LANGUAGE" RELATED TO A LONG TERM SOLUTION. KARIM CONFIRMED THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED DURING THE FINAL TWO-AND ONE-HALF HOUR SESSION, BUT THAT THERE HAD BEEN INSUFFICIENT TIME TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS AT THE OFFICIAL LEVEL. HOWEVER, KARIM SID, THE BDG WAS STILL UNSURE WHETHER OR NOT JAGJIVAN RAM HAD THE AUTHORITY TO REACH THE UNDERSTANDING HE DID.

5. FOREIGN SECRETARY MEHTA TOLD THE CHARGE THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON THE "THE IMPORTANT CRUCIALRANGE" OF FLOW FOR THE DRY SEASON LITERALLY IN THE FINAL MINUTES OF THE DISCUSSION WITH ZIA. THERE HAD BEEN NO TIME TO WORK OUT FORMULATIONS ON OTHER WATER FLOWS, A LONG TERM AGREEMENT, OR "INSPECTIONS". THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE IN DELHI. MEHTA SAID THAT THE GOI HAD MADE FURTHER CONCESSIONS BELOW ITS REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SAKE OF ESTABLISHING GOOD RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH AND IN THE HOPE THAT AN ATMOSPHERE OF TRUST AND CONFIDENCE WOULD BE ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED THEREAFTER. HE SAID THAT BORDER ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED IN THE SAME CONTEXT. THE INDIANS HAD EXPRESSED THE HOPE THERE WOULD BE IMPROVE-CONFIDENTIAL

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MENT ON THE BORDER. MEHTA REMARKED, HOWEVER, THAT SUCCESS IN THIS AREA WOULD DEPEND UPON BOTH SIDES. IN REGARD TO POLITICAL REFUGEES IN INDIA, MEHTA SAID THAT THE GOI HAD TAKEN THE POSITION IT WOULD BE HAPPY IF THEY WENT BACK, BUT AN ATMOSPHERE MUST EXIST IN WHICH THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO RETURN.  
SCHNEIDER

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## Message Attributes

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